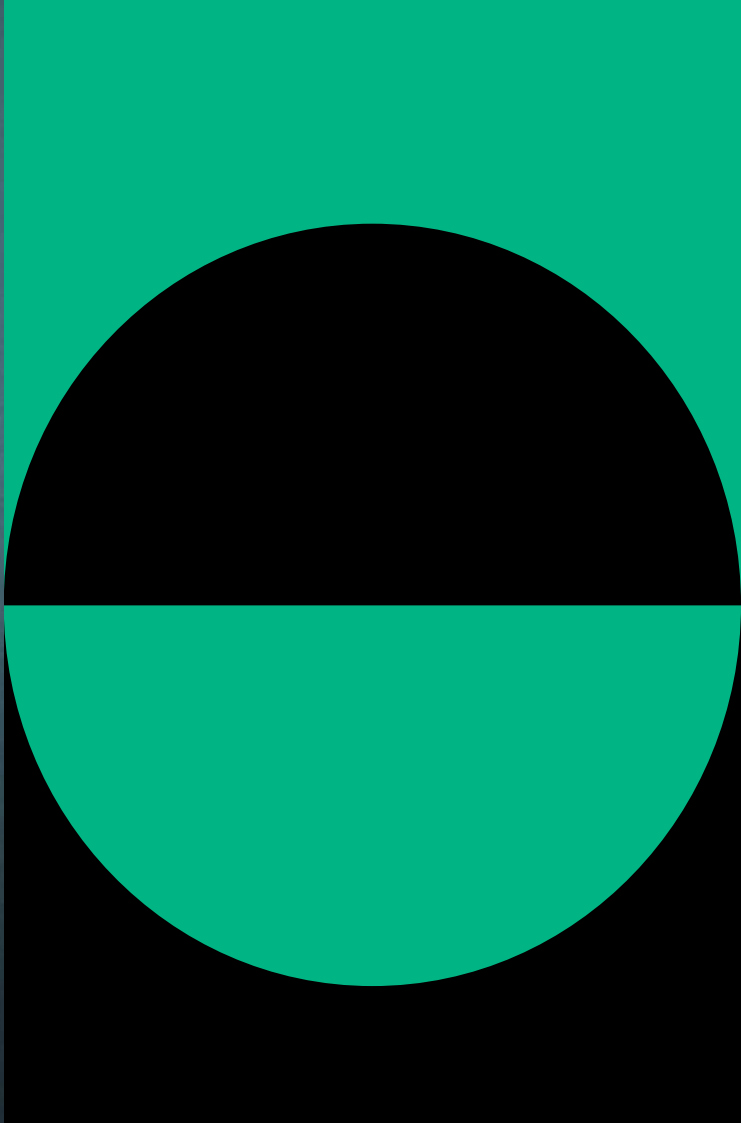


Guide Dogs.

2023

NSW/ACT Annual Report.





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Warning: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are warned that this report contains images and names of deceased persons.

Overview.

Our vision.

A world that is inclusive and accessible for everyone with low vision or blindness.

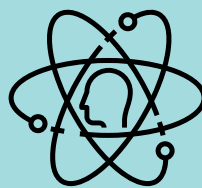
Our mission.

Create opportunities and champion the rights of people with low vision or blindness. Build a community of individuals who share our mindset and ambition for accessibility and inclusivity.

Our purpose.

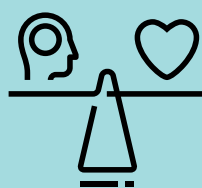
Break the boundaries that limit people with low vision or blindness.

Our values.



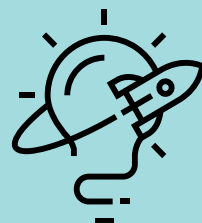
Our Clients come first in everything we do.

We believe everyone should have access to the support and tools required to live a free and independent life.



Lead with head and heart.

Forever focused on our purpose and mission, we combine care and careful planning to deliver successes worth celebrating.



Never stop exploring.

We're fearlessly creative. We've always asked and answered the tough questions and if there's a better way, we'll find it.



Walk the talk.

The buck stops with us. So we keep our word and keep going, no matter what.



Lift each other.

From a guiding hand to a high five, we unleash and acknowledge everyone's potential.

Our strategy.

Leading the charge towards an accessible and inclusive world by 2030.

This year, we launched our new Strategy 2030 to support our vision, purpose, and mission.

▶▶ What we will do.

Aims: The services we will provide to support people with low vision or blindness:

- Advocate and educate - eliminate systemic barriers to participation and inclusion.
- Sustainably expand our reach - support more people with low vision or blindness to achieve their goals.
- Increase our impact - continuously improve and expand our services.

▶▶ How we will do it.

Enablers: Invest in the people, processes and systems that will help us to maximise impact for our Clients:

- Service will embody our values - invest in our systems, our people and our culture.
- A sustainable business model - strategically target our fundraising activities.
- An adaptive operating model - leverage our brand and partnerships to increase services for Clients with non-correctible low vision loss.

A report from our Chair.

Leading the charge.



On behalf of the Guide Dogs NSW/ACT Board of Directors, I am pleased to present our 2022-2023 Annual Report. As always, it is a wonderful opportunity to reflect on our achievements, celebrate our successes and share exciting plans for our future direction.

This year, we launched our Strategy 2030, an ambitious plan which sets out our long-term strategic direction and priorities for the next seven years that will see us lead the charge towards an accessible and inclusive world.

We aim to achieve this through three key areas:

1. Advocate and educate to eliminate systemic barriers to participation and inclusion;
2. Sustainably expand our reach to support more people with low vision or blindness to achieve their goals; and
3. Increase our impact to continuously improve and expand our services.

In order to deliver on our strategy we must recognise what is important to our Clients to enable them to achieve their goals. This year, we invested in two key pieces of research to help us understand this; the Guide Dogs Australia Client Survey and the development and implementation of the Social Impact

Measurement Framework. With a focus on impact, rather than outputs, the insights gained will help us to refine our services to ensure we can best serve our Clients to meet their needs, as well as inform our advocacy work to champion the rights of people with low vision or blindness and secure better policy and funding outcomes.

Our current financial reserves support an opportunity for us to expand and grow our reach. Technology plays a large part in our future with a responsibility to protect the information we maintain. Like many organisations, we are seeing an increased cost in cyber security, governance and administration. As Strategy 2030 is implemented higher costs will be incurred. This cost is forecast to continue to increase over the coming years.

I have every confidence in our CEO, Dale Cleaver, and the Executive Leadership Team to deliver on Strategy 2030, and as you will read throughout this report, much work has already begun. We are excited for the future and look forward to its implementation.

I am proud to report Guide Dogs NSW/ACT received the Dorothy Award for our 'Access All Areas' campaign at the recent International Guide Dogs Federation (IGDF) Conference. The award

recognises our efforts to promote advocacy and raise awareness of Guide Dog Handler rights. Congratulations to everyone involved in creating this campaign.

More recently, Guide Dogs NSW/ACT achieved the remarkable feat of winning not one, but two accolades at the Australian Financial Review's 'Most Innovative Companies' awards.

Our submission, Workplace for the Future, showcased our flagship office at St Leonards and everything it has to offer in terms of accessibility and inclusion.

The first win came in the Most Innovative Company – Government, Education and Not-For-Profit category, while the second was awarded for Best Internal Innovation. This recognition is a testament to our unwavering commitment to create a vibrant, welcoming and inclusive space for all, showcasing best practice in accessible, inclusive and sustainable design. I extend my congratulations to Dale and the St Leonards Property Project Team and hope this recognition will inspire other organisations to create more accessible and inclusive spaces.

On behalf of the Board I'd like to thank Dale and his Executive Leadership Team for their commitment throughout the year. The impact of our vital work is demonstrated throughout this report and I commend them for all the incredible work they do for our Clients.

I also wish to extend my sincere gratitude to my fellow Board Directors for their trust, guidance and commitment. Earlier this year in January we welcomed Cameron Evans and Karen Knight to the Board. Both have brought new ideas, experience and energy to the table and I am looking forward to continuing to work with you.

I am extremely grateful to Ian Jamieson, who is sadly coming to the end of his Directorship with Guide Dogs NSW/ACT at our AGM in November. Ian has made an incredible contribution as a Director over the past 14 years and has stepped up into the role of Chair numerous times, for which I am personally grateful. Thank you Ian, your expertise and enthusiasm will be missed.

We have also said goodbye to Liz Ward who has utilised her professional experience to further Board discussion during her time with us. We wish her well for the future.

Finally, I would like to thank our most important stakeholders, our supporters. None of the important work we do for our Clients could be achieved without the generosity of our incredible donors, staff and volunteers. Thank you. We simply couldn't do it without you.



Mr Kieran Maurice Lane LLB Hons, LLM

Chair



Message from our CEO.

Breaking the boundaries.



At Guide Dogs NSW/ACT, our vision is to create a world that is inclusive and accessible for everyone with low vision or blindness. As stated in the Report from the Chair, our new Strategy 2030 outlines the key initiatives we will undertake as we strive to achieve this, by advocating and educating, sustainably expanding our reach and increasing our impact.

Here at Guide Dogs NSW/ACT we walk the talk and, to deliver on our strategy, we must invest in the people, processes and systems that will help us to maximise impact for our Clients. Our service must embody our values, which is why we aspire to build a community of individuals who share our mindset and champion a work environment that embraces and enables diversity, inclusivity and accessibility. It brings me great pleasure to share some key initiatives that we have implemented this year as we begin to deliver on this commitment.

In order to break the boundaries that limit people with low vision or blindness we must advocate and educate to eliminate systemic barriers to participation and inclusion. To support that goal, we have invested in the newly created position of General Manager, Social Change. This role will be responsible for developing our advocacy strategy and implementing our key priorities to champion the rights

of people with low vision or blindness and effect positive and meaningful change. I look forward to supporting this critical piece of work in the coming year.

We developed a new Disability Inclusion Action Plan which will be implemented in the next three years. Guided by this plan, we aim to actively encourage, value and welcome staff with a disability; ensure our built, digital and communication environments are accessible; and embrace inclusion innovation for our staff, Clients and stakeholders.

I am also proud to report The Guide Dogs NSW/ACT Reflect Reconciliation Plan (RAP) was approved by Reconciliation Australia in June 2023. Our Reflect RAP will play a crucial role in building a more inclusive, equitable, and respectful society for all by acknowledging and honouring Indigenous cultures, promoting cultural understanding, increasing employment opportunities, supporting Indigenous businesses and encouraging reconciliation.

We have continued to invest in technology, teaming up with Amazon Alexa to create a unique Alexa Skill. After a successful pilot earlier this year we are now actively rolling out the Alexa install program, providing Clients with Echo Dots, home installations and comprehensive education. This allows

users to explore our services, listen to newsletters, automate tasks at home or even request a call with one of our team members. This is another example of how we are innovating to make life more accessible and convenient for both our employees and our blind and low vision community.

Following the successful delivery of our flagship premises at St Leonards (and the recent industry recognition received for it!) we are continuing to roll out a program of upgrades to our regional offices, including a move to new premises in Coffs Harbour and, most recently, Canberra. A fibre network upgrade for the Guide Dogs Centre at Glossodia has also been successfully completed and we are delighted with the impact to this crucial site with speeds 20 times faster than before!

Finally, following a strategic review last year, our Centre for Eye Health has refined its model to provide advanced ocular imaging and diagnostic management services to patients who meet the vulnerability criteria related to socio-economic disadvantage or ageing in NSW. This will ensure our services continue to improve access to low vision services and reach those who need it most.

Of course, we couldn't achieve any of this important work without the support of our generous donors and supporters, many of whom are showcased throughout this report. Whether you are a one-off donor, regular giver, Puppy Pal, community fundraiser, support group, major donor, corporate partner or bequestor – you all make a significant difference in the lives of others and we are so grateful for your ongoing support.

I'd like to thank the Board of Directors and the Executive Leadership Team for

their guidance and support throughout the year and extend that gratitude to all of our employees and volunteers. I am incredibly proud of our achievements and I am excited for what comes next in the year ahead. Thank you for your enthusiasm, drive and passion as we lead the charge towards an accessible and inclusive world.



Dale Cleaver

Chief Executive Officer



A message from our Patrons.

A message from the joint Patrons of Guide Dogs NSW/ACT.

As proud Patrons, Dennis and I are delighted to continue the long-standing relationship between the office of the Governor of New South Wales and Guide Dogs NSW/ACT.

Earlier this year, we welcomed Guide Dogs NSW/ACT to Government House to be part of our AustraliaDay@theHouse celebrations. Team members Sarah Watts and Anne Little showcased Guide Dogs' amazing work through demonstrations and an information stall, raising awareness and encouraging community support. Ambassador Dogs Venus and Nancy were a particular hit, receiving lots of attention from the nearly 4,500 visitors who came through the Government House Gates on the day.

Of course, the work of Guide Dogs NSW/ACT extends far beyond the training of Guide Dogs. We commend the delivery of information sessions and open days that provide important education and training in mobility and accessibility options and adaptive technology, as well as online engagement that builds connection in the low vision and blind community. We are particularly excited to learn about future directions for the organisation outlined in the 2030 Strategy.



Much of what Guide Dogs does would not be possible without the community's support and we thank all who have donated, partnered, or volunteered over the past year. Your generosity is a vital contribution to the mission of empowering those with low vision or blindness to actively participate in their communities and lead full and independent lives.

Congratulations to all at Guide Dogs NSW/ACT for another year of committed effort and advocacy. Your dedication makes tangible and impactful steps towards an accessible and inclusive world for all.

**Her Excellency the Honourable
Margaret Beazley AC KC**
Governor of New South Wales,
and Mr Dennis Wilson.



Our Clients.

About our services.

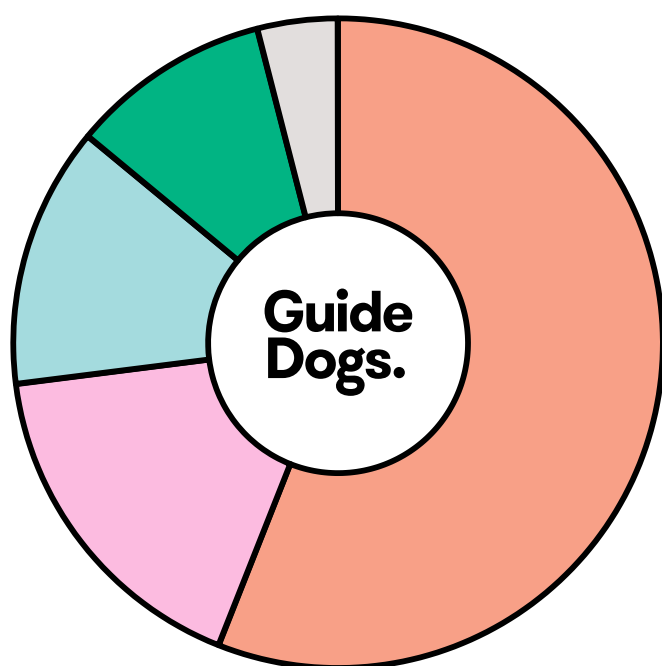
When social, physical and digital environments are not accessible or inclusive, people with low vision or blindness can face barriers to living the life they want. We work with our Clients, their families and caregivers to increase their skills, confidence and access to support and accessibility tools, giving them more choice for how they go about their day-to-day lives and get out and about. This is achieved through the following services and supports:

Guide Dog Mobility.

Supporting Clients to partner with a Guide Dog to access the community with confidence.

Orientation and Mobility Services (adults and children).

Everyday travel skills to keep Clients moving with confidence.



Low Vision Orthoptics.

Supporting Clients to understand their level of functional vision and providing techniques and options for accessing visual information.

Occupational Therapy.

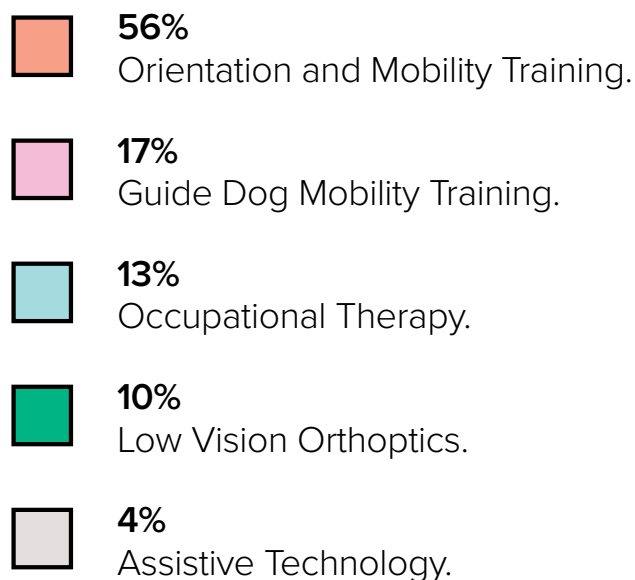
Practical skills for everyday living, regardless of age or level of functional vision.

Assistive Technology.

Support to identify and use the right technology to make life easier at home, at work, at school and in the community.

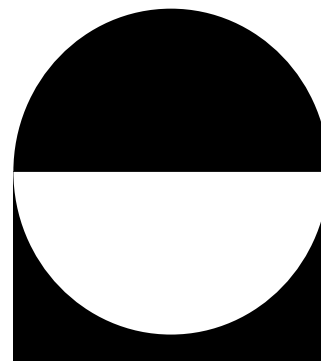
Services breakdown by type.

All Services are technology-enabled and provide assistive technology.



Our impact.

We support our Clients to pursue meaningful activities that are important to them and to build and maintain strong relationships and connections to help them feel more positive about the future. This year, we surveyed our Clients as part of our Social Impact Measures Framework.



75%

of Clients say they are more confident performing daily activities.

“I now find things that used to be challenging not so overwhelming. I am much more confident to have another go, when I used to give up.”

82%

of Clients say they are more independent when getting out and about.

“Guide Dogs gave me back my life. It made me realise I can leave the house and I feel safe with the cane. The cane opened up my life.”

74%

of Clients say they are more confident doing activities that are important to them.

“I have a cane which gives me independence, I am engaging with lawn bowls, I am connecting to a falls prevention program.”

79%

of Clients say they recognise more of their strengths.

“The service really supported my personal development as a person living with low vision. I was listened to, was able to set personal goals and meet them. It was challenging but empowering.”

Vicki's story.

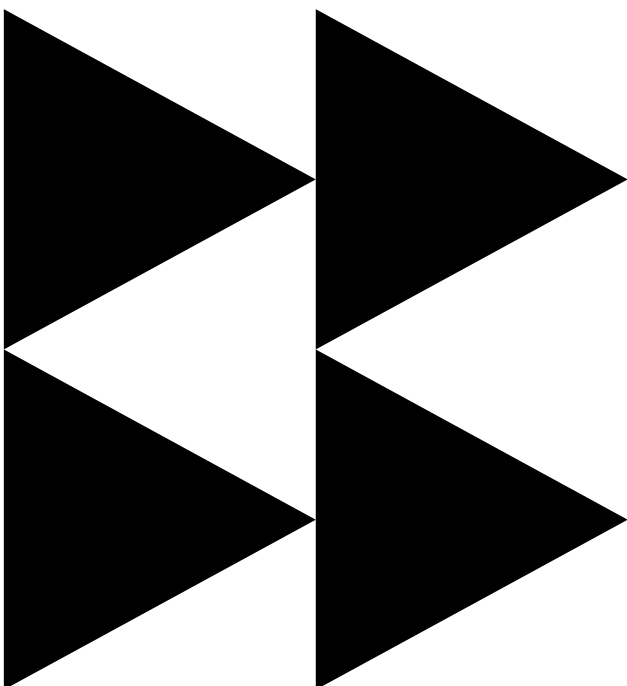
Vicki recently moved to a retirement village with her husband. She worked with Guide Dogs' Orientation and Mobility Services to learn how to get around the village.

Vicki can now get out and about to the café, the shop, the hairdresser, the bar and the gym. She can meet with friends and participate in activities in her local community. Now that she's able to get around, Vicki says the "world has opened up enormously" and "life looks so much brighter".

"I love to be able to get into what's happening... the activities and things that you can be involved in here. I love being able to confidently say 'yes, I'll be there'."

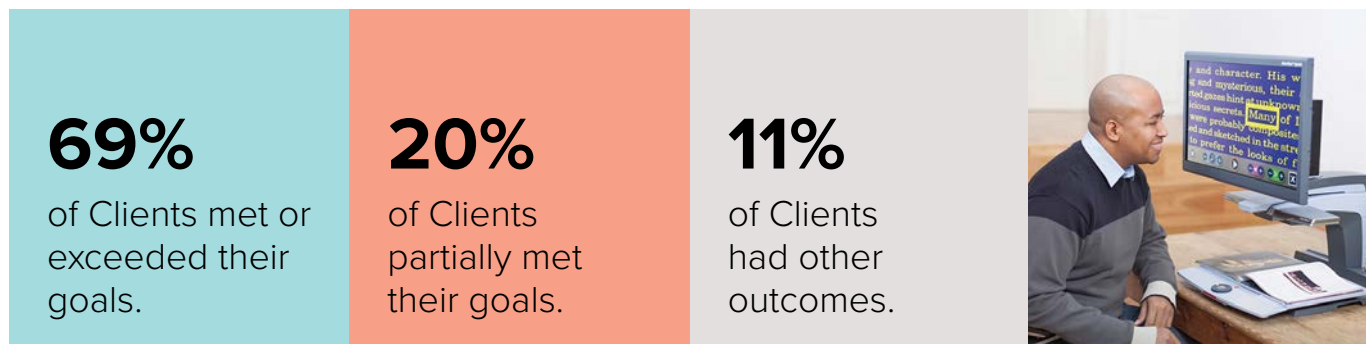
When her husband recently spent some time in hospital, Vicki was able to find her way to pick up prescriptions and some groceries.

"I have confidence that if my husband ever went to hospital again, I know I'd be absolutely fine on my own. Being able to live on my own successfully was an absolute achievement."

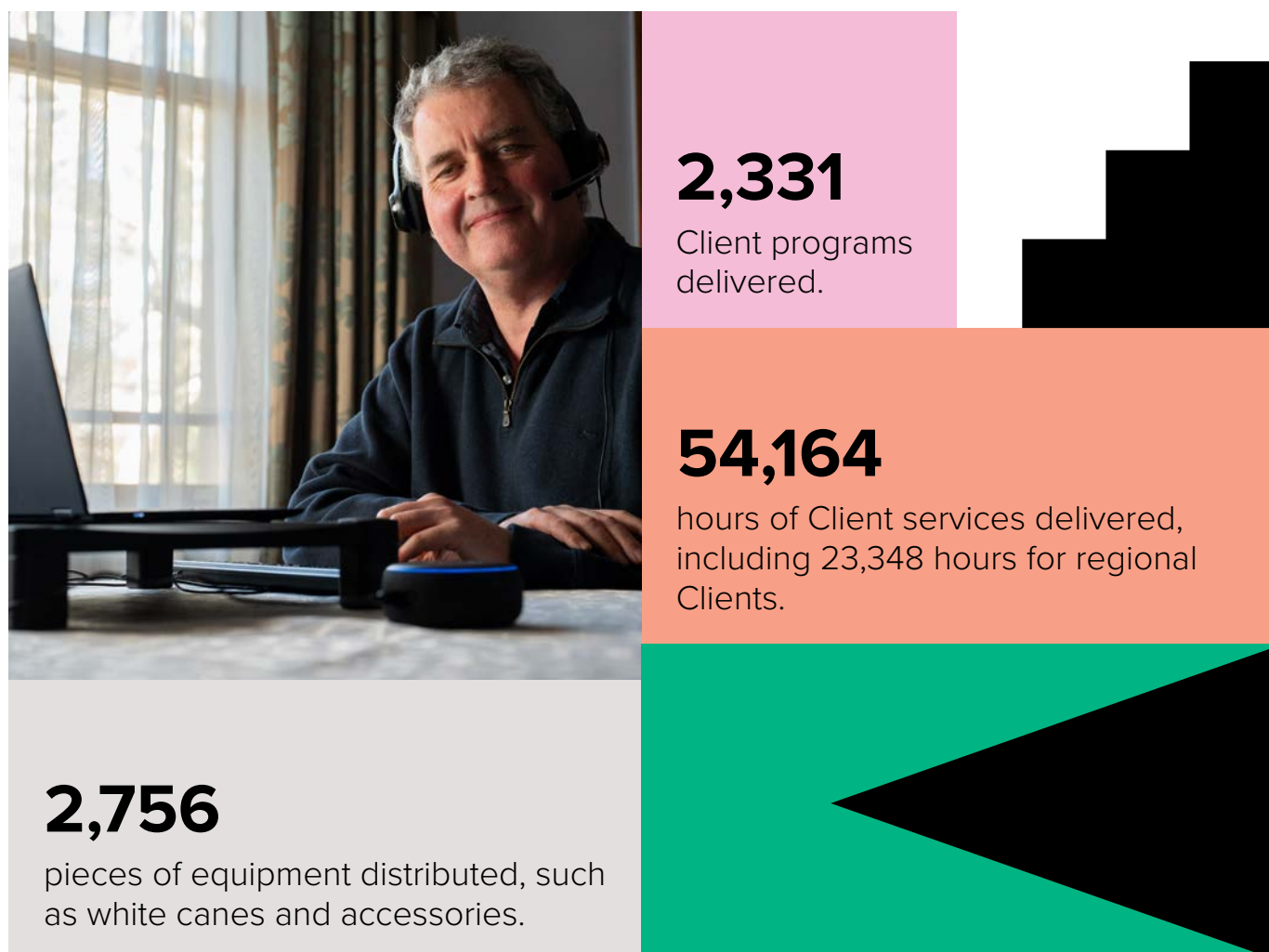


Achieving outcomes together.

We work with Clients to understand what they want to achieve and set goals to support them. We seek their feedback to know how we've done assisting them to achieve their goals. Sometimes, a Client may not fully achieve their goals due to health or environmental reasons, in this case we will work with them to reset their aspirations.



Our outputs.



Outward Bound.

Earlier this year, Guide Dogs NSW/ACT invited high school-age Clients to their Outward Bound Australia Camp in Tharwa, ACT for an action-packed five days in the great outdoors.

Led by the inspiring Outward Bound leaders and several Guide Dogs staff, Clients were challenged to develop their problem-solving, daily living and Orientation and Mobility skills. Above all, however, our Clients were encouraged to challenge their level of risk, determination and resilience in a safe and supportive environment.

Every day, the campers faced various challenges – from the adrenaline-inducing to the quiet and self-reflective – each one presenting its own personal rewards. Highlights included hiking, abseiling, a 90-minute ‘solo’ reflection period and a 15-metre-high Giant Swing! Each activity was modified by the Outward-Bound leaders to meet individual requirements, with emphasis being placed on ‘giving it your best shot’.

“There’s a big wide world out there waiting for me to explore.”

Orlando, Outward Bound participant.

Each Client demonstrated great strength, resilience and determination during the camp, meaning everyone, including the Outward Bound and Guide Dogs staff, could leave feeling a sense of accomplishment.

“We’ve learnt so much from the kids as well, it’s just so nice to see them excited, happy, joyful and making these achievements,” said Nicole, a Guide Dogs Orientation and Mobility Specialist.

A big thank you to Newman’s Own, Inc. who provided the grant that enabled us to attend the camp.



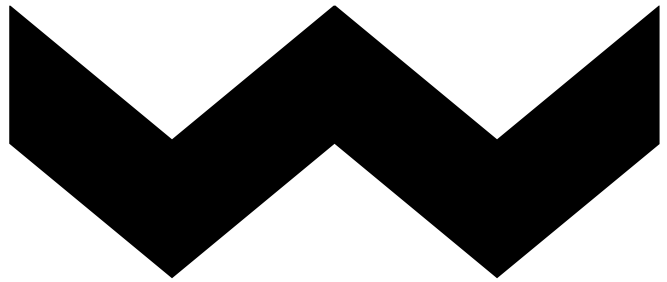
Centre for Eye Health.

Early detection

Centre for Eye Health (CFEH) was established by Guide Dogs NSW/ACT and the University of New South Wales (UNSW) in 2008 with the aim of reducing the incidence of preventable blindness in the community through early detection, diagnosis and better management of eye disease through clinical services, innovative research and education.

Following a strategic review last year, CFEH provides advanced ocular imaging and diagnostic management services to patients who meet the vulnerability criteria related to socio-economic disadvantage or ageing in NSW. No one has paid any out-of-pocket expenses for their appointment since CFEH opened thanks to the generosity of Guide Dogs NSW/ACT and their supporters.

Visit **Centre for Eye Health** for more information.



8,838

patients examined for glaucoma.



1,370

patients examined with other conditions requiring eye care.

13,794

diagnostic and management appointments booked.

2,145

patients examined for macular degeneration.

622

patients examined for diabetic retinopathy.

819

patients examined with optic nerve concerns.



Our dogs.

Our impact.

A Guide Dog can create profound change for people with low vision or blindness by offering a perfect blend of independence and companionship.

280

working Guide Dogs
in the community.



41

Court Companion Dogs
in the community.

151

dogs matched with
their new Handlers:

37 Guide Dogs

86 Therapy Dogs

20 Breeding Stock Dogs

7 Ambassador Dogs.

212

puppies born.

The Hendersons.

For Ian Henderson and his wife, Eileen, puppy raising has helped keep them on their toes in retirement.

The Mosman locals started their journey as Puppy Raisers back in 2002 when, unfortunately, on the same day Ian retired they lost their rescue dog.

As regular donors to Guide Dogs NSW/ACT, the pair soon learned they could support the charity in another way; by opening the doors of their home to help shape future Guide Dogs.

More than 20 years and 25 puppies later the pair still fondly recall the dogs they have hosted.

“Talbot was the first, back in July of 2002,” Ian said. “He went on to be a Guide Dog – in fact the first five dogs we had did. I remember someone saying ‘you’ll be devastated when one doesn’t’, and of course we’ve had ones that didn’t pass, but they all go on to do great things.

“It’s a great joy to raise them and make a difference for others, it really is.”

Guide Dogs NSW/ACT continues to hold a fond place in the hearts of the Hendersons, with Eileen now also a Client of the same organisation she has generously supported for decades.

At 87-years-old, Ian said puppy raising also had a positive effect on him. Now the custodian of stud dog Eldon, Ian says he remains motivated by his four-legged friend to get out each day to exercise and socialise.

“Eldon is almost a Therapy Dog for all of the ladies in the Mosman Junction area,” he said.

“He’s a walking advertisement for Guide Dogs. People always stop and smile and ask me about him.”

Raising and training a puppy is an amazing experience that is incredibly rewarding for the whole family. Raising a puppy is a 12-to-15-month commitment. Around half of our Puppy Raisers will go on to raise another puppy, so we always need new volunteers. If you are interested in becoming a Puppy Raiser **we’d love to hear from you!**



Ari and Murphy.

At two-years old, Ari has already faced significant challenges in his life, being born blind and losing his hearing due to bacterial meningitis. Despite the difficulties, his mother Jamie was determined to ensure that Ari never felt alone.

Knowing the power of companionship, Jamie reached out to Guide Dogs for Early Childhood Orientation and Mobility Services for a Therapy Dog, and in January they were matched with Murphy!

Murphy has turned out to be the perfect companion for Ari as he's always there by his side, providing comfort and reassurance while Ari gently explores the world around him through touch.

Murphy has also become a comforting source to the entire family, providing emotional support through his calming presence both at appointments and in the home. Jamie lovingly describes Murphy as a big, affectionate goofball who loves big hugs.

“Murphy is everything we didn't know we needed.”

Jamie, Ari's mum.

Our Therapy Dogs like Murphy offer stability and comfort in every situation. Your support ensures that we can continue to match these incredible dogs with people like Ari, to provide them with a loyal companion who can help them through the tough times.





Our people.

Our impact.

238

full-time equivalent employees:

186 full-time

77 part-time

49 casual.



545

volunteers:

244 active volunteer Puppy Raisers

47 Canine Court Companion volunteers

71 Guide Dog Centre volunteers

183 other volunteers across the organisation.

11

Courts serviced across NSW.

1,939

Canine Court Companion Program hours.

Staff milestones.

30 years.

Jennifer Moon

Principal Advisor / Manager Access and Stakeholder Engagement.

25 years.

Kevin Cherry

Supporter Experience Assistant / Receptionist.

20 years.

Samantha O’Keeffe

Alternate Pathways Manager.

Carolyn Bates

Orientation and Mobility Specialist.

Carole Grayson

Guide Dog Mobility Instructor / Orientation and Mobility Specialist.

Peter McKenzie

Guide Dog Mobility Instructor / Orientation and Mobility Specialist.

Gloria Sherwood

Orientation and Mobility Specialist (casual).

15 years.

Caroline Moeser

Veterinary and Breeding Services Manager.

Michelle Stoakes

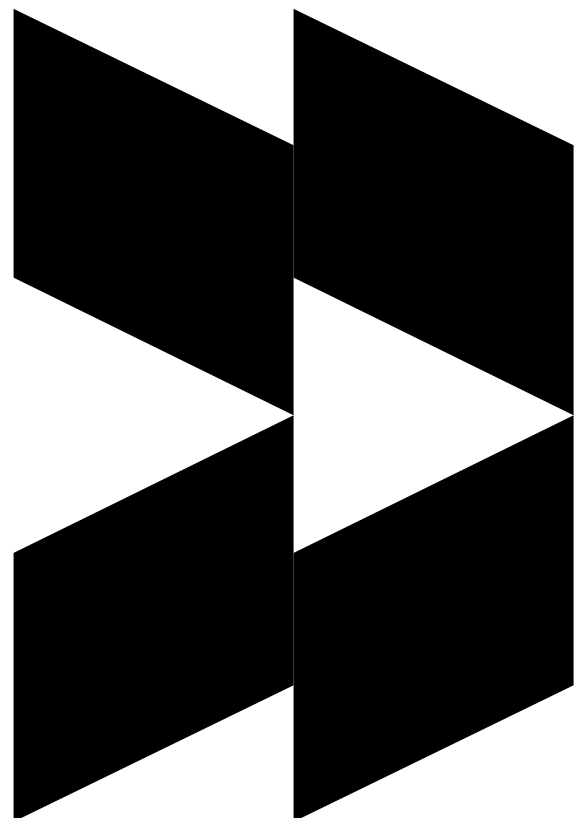
Puppy Development Advisor.

Alison Gardner

Canine Facilities Manager.

Toni Harrison

Administration Assistant.



The Joe Finucane Perpetual Award.

The Joe Finucane Perpetual Award was established and announced at the 2017 Annual General Meeting named after Joe who served as CEO for nearly 20 years, retiring in 2009. He is remembered as an innovative, progressive leader with a gentle, yet determined approach. We seek nominations each year from staff.

Our beloved Guide Dog Mobility Instructor Doug Ritchie celebrates 26 years with us this year. In 2022, he was a most deserving winner of the Joe Finucane Perpetual Award.

Doug has worked for Guide Dogs NSW/ACT since 1997, however he started his Guide Dog Mobility career in Scotland at the Guide Dogs for the Blind Association 42 years ago.

Doug is very well respected by his fellow colleagues. His many Clients over the year all speak highly of him regarding the delivery of his services. Doug is very generous with his time and is always happy to have a chat and share his knowledge. He is more than happy to lend a hand in the different parts of NSW/ACT travelling to deliver Guide Dog Training programs in the northern, southern and western regions.

In addition to his role at Guide Dogs NSW/ACT, Doug also holds the title of International Guide Dog Federation Accredited Assessor, where he visits many Guide Dog organisations around the world assessing the Guide Dog Schools and working with them to keep delivering outstanding outcomes, just as he does back here for us at Guide Dogs NSW/ACT.

Thank you, Doug.



Our commitment to equity, access and inclusion.

Guide Dogs NSW/ACT is committed to improving equity, access and inclusion for all stakeholders across all facets of the organisation. We strive for continual improvement in our processes and practices to enable an equitable and inclusive world for everyone and demonstrate best practice in accessibility in all we do. We continue to assess and update our approach, policies and practices to align with this commitment.

Disability Inclusion Action Plan.

A comprehensive and independent audit by the Australian Network on Disability provided Guide Dogs NSW/ACT with guidance on how we could create an even more accessible and inclusive workplace. Following this, we appointed a Disability Inclusion Advisor in January 2023, Jaci Armstrong.

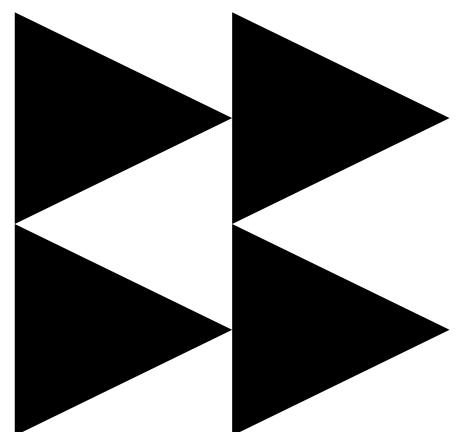
Through a consultative process we developed a new Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) to span 2024 to 2027. This plan builds on our motivated internal culture and established expertise to provide greater opportunities and achieve equity for our current and future staff, Clients and all stakeholders we engage with.

Our DIAP contains three key strategic priorities, each of which contains specific actions and measures that will be implemented at various stages over the next three years.

They are:

- 1. Our people** – We actively encourage, value and welcome staff with disability and will provide tools for their career success.
- 2. Our practices** – We will ensure our built, digital and communication environments are accessible to all.
- 3. Authentic leadership** – We will demonstrate best practice and embrace inclusion innovation for our staff, Clients and stakeholders. We will use our expertise to continue to educate and influence government, businesses and the broader community.

Our DIAP also outlines targets relating to our workforce to increase representation to 15 percent of employees with a known disability, 10 percent of employees with lived experience and two percent of employees identifying as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.



Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan.

A Reconciliation Action Plan is a strategic document that provides a framework for developing and maintaining relationships with, and creating opportunities for, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The development of the Guide Dogs NSW/ACT **Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan** (Reflect RAP) marks a significant milestone in fostering workplace diversity and inclusion. It demonstrates our commitment to building a more inclusive, equitable and respectful society for all and outlines practical actions and initiatives that we will undertake to promote reconciliation and support Indigenous communities.

Much of the content was informed by the work of our very own Aunty Mary Hooker, who was an Aboriginal Elder, author and educator, as well as being a Guide Dogs Client and ambassador. Aunty Mary used her experience of vision loss to help others through the co-design and development of culturally appropriate education resources.

Congratulations to the RAP Committee for their work to develop our Reflect RAP, which includes Annette Clarke (Executive sponsor), Anne Little (Chair, RAP Committee), Belinda Latimore, Paula Walsh, Jennifer Moon, Gavin Strait, Ying Wah Wan, Brittany van Saarloos and Mariagrazia Bellio.



Our volunteers.

Our volunteers at the lifeblood of our organisation. They selflessly give their time, care, expertise and energy to allow us to continue our vital work and support our Clients to live the life of their choosing. For this generous gift, we say thank you.

Our volunteers provide support in a variety of ways, including administration, transport, gardening and maintenance, events and all things puppy-related! They assist us in all facets of our Dog Services, from breeding, kennel cleaning, feeding, walking, grooming, temporary caring and, of course, puppy raising.

It takes a special person to be a Puppy Raiser; to love, nurture and teach a puppy for a year or more and then say goodbye, hoping that their loyal friend will go on to change the life of a Client. Thanks to our dedicated Puppy Raisers, our dogs can provide freedom to someone with low vision or blindness as a Guide Dog; provide support for someone with autism or PTSD as a Therapy Dog; or help ease the stress of a court appearance as one of our Court Companion Dogs.

From the time the pup is taken in at around eight weeks of age until they are assessed at about 12 months of age, our Puppy Raiser will have dedicated many hundreds of hours to loving and preparing this dog to change the life of a Client.

We could not support our Clients in the many ways we do without the invaluable work of our dedicated volunteers, and for that we thank you.

Staff disability network and training.

Whilst developing our DIAP, Guide Dogs NSW/ACT made some substantive improvements to accessibility and inclusion. This included the launch of the Disability Employee Network, which is open to all employees who identify with lived experience and any of their colleagues who are keen to be allies. Guide Dogs NSW/ACT employees have completed Disability Awareness Training through 'Let's Talk Disability', we have also developed a comprehensive Workplace Adjustment Policy and upgraded our employee and visitor registration process and technology to be accessible.

Accessibility courses.

Our Access team has developed self-paced online courses to help Guide Dogs NSW/ACT employees build skills around accessibility and create documents that are accessible to all. These courses form part of the My Learning suite of training modules required to be completed by all employees. Courses cover topics including how to create accessible content, creating accessible Word and Excel documents and Outlook emails, and creating and presenting PowerPoint presentations. This is part of the suite of **Accessible Communities** resources launched publicly this year.

We See Love!

Over 40 Guide Dogs NSW/ACT Clients, employees and members of the community marched in the 2023 Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras Parade to celebrate access and inclusion in our float entitled 'We See Love'.

Gulliver, our much-loved, giant 4.3 metre fibre-glass Labrador Guide Dog, led the float in an amazing multi-coloured costume created by artist Nicole Barakat. We were joined by some of our wonderful Clients, who dazzled in bright, colourful sparkly items.

Some of our Clients experienced the parade through an audio description service provided to those marching or seated within the parade's official accessible viewing area, which described the parade and its surrounds in detail.

“Having Guide Dogs involved in Mardi Gras is all about inclusion, representation, celebrating differences and being proud of who we are. Mardi Gras gives us an opportunity to celebrate ourselves as being people with low vision or blindness in a public sphere.”

Ingrid, Guide Dogs NSW/ACT Client.



**Guide
Dogs.**



Welcome to our
Pup-up Café



Our reach.

Our digital reach.

723,286

Guide Dogs NSW/ACT website sessions. 67.5% increase from FY21-22.



1.2m+

engagements across all Guide Dogs Australia social media channels.

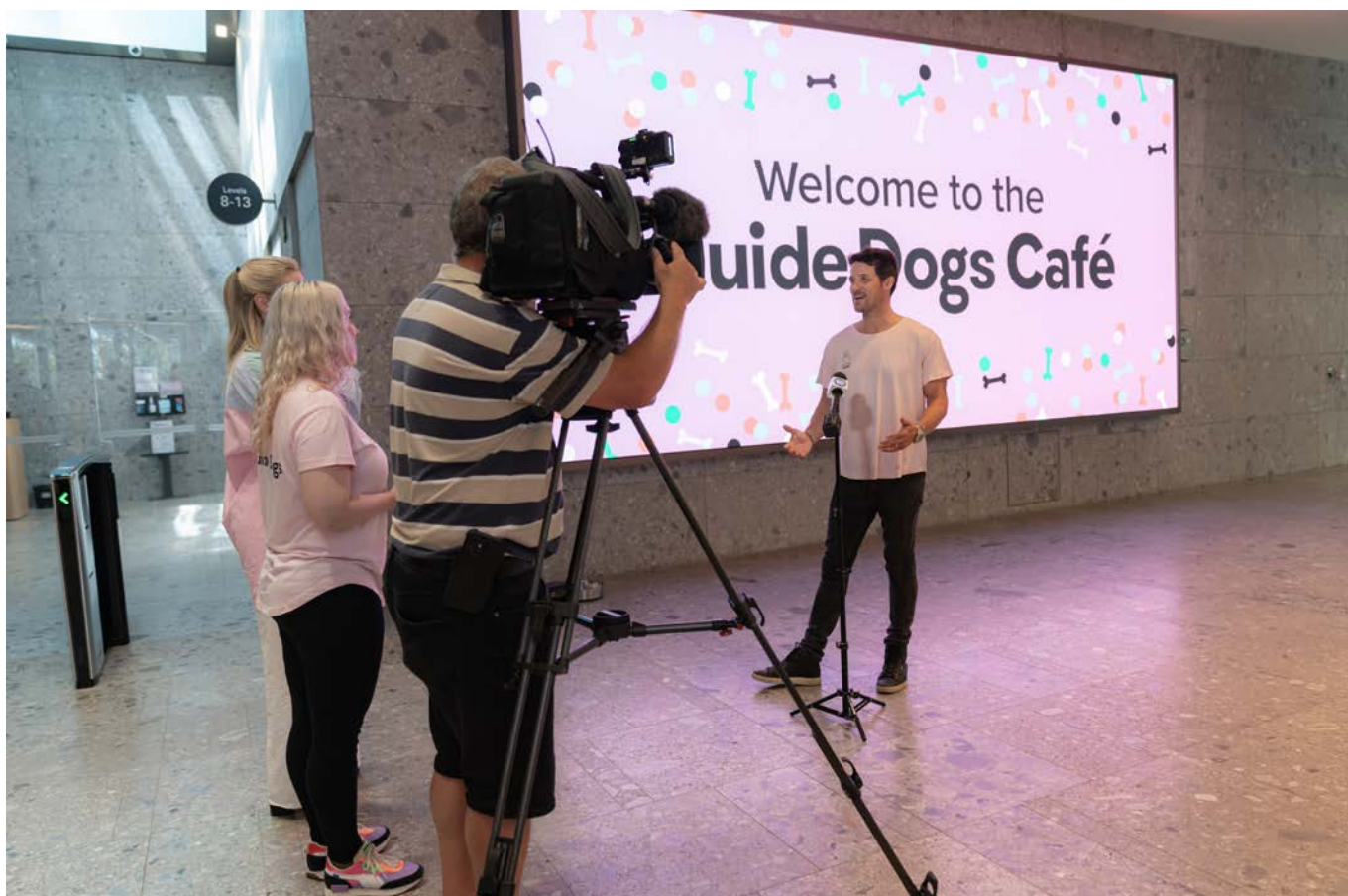
167k+

followers across all Guide Dogs Australia social media channels.



46.5m+

impressions across all Guide Dogs Australia social media channels.



Using our voice to advocate and educate.

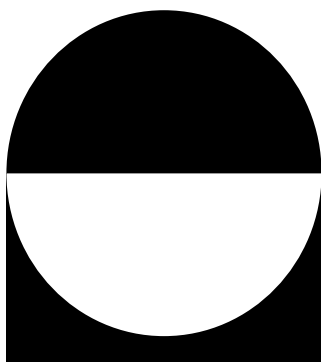
Access advice and industry training.

Our Access and Industry Training Teams continue to work tirelessly to remove barriers, ensuring people with low vision or blindness can experience the world with freedom and independence.

This year, we delivered 102 training sessions to 1,272 participants across multiple industry bodies to improve frontline staff capabilities in supporting people with low vision or blindness.

This is an increase of 36 percent and 46 percent respectively. We also provided access advice on the best functional outcomes to various government and private industries to help improve community access to places, spaces and services.

Some of the organisations we work with include Transport for NSW, NSW Department of Health, NSW Taxi Council and rideshare companies, NSW Electoral Commission, NSW Department of Communities and Justice, Fire and Rescue NSW, NSW Police Force, Access Canberra, building and construction companies, Bangarra Dance Theatre, Sydney Dance Company, Sydney Modern, Sydney Opera House, Australian War Memorial, the ABC, and more.



Accessible communities.

This year, we launched **Accessible Communities**, an online hub dedicated to businesses and organisations that are committed to creating inclusive spaces and services for people who are blind or have low vision. It's a one-stop-shop with practical information, resources and learning modules to help people:

- learn about best practice accessibility;
- find resources to support accessible practices; and
- explore customised training and support from Guide Dogs NSW/ACT to enhance their physical and digital accessibility.

The hub encourages people to learn about **our approach to accessibility** and foster an inclusive world where everyone thrives.





International Guide Dog Day 2023.

On International Guide Dog Day we celebrate the important role Guide Dogs play in supporting people all around the world with low vision or blindness to achieve their goals and live independently.

This year, our 'Talk to the Handler' campaign called on the community to work towards better understanding and supporting Guide Dog Handlers by highlighting the issues that affect their independence. We asked our community to further their education by following our 'five top tips', accessing resources, asking someone they know with blindness or low vision about their experience, or undertaking formal training for work, then passing that knowledge on.

International White Cane Day 2022.

On International White Cane Day we celebrate the achievements of people with blindness or low vision. It is always an important day on the Guide Dogs calendar as the **white cane** is the mobility tool of choice for most Guide Dogs Clients.

This International White Cane Day our 'Look up. Listen up. Let me be.' campaign focused on how we can take simple steps to create a more accessible environment for everyone. It urged the public to be more aware of how they might be obstructing people with low vision or blindness, with the aim of making our streets safer and more accessible for all. Crucially, it asked people to look up from their phones and turn the volume down or off – as well as discouraging would-be helpers from grabbing white cane users, or their canes, without asking if they need help first.

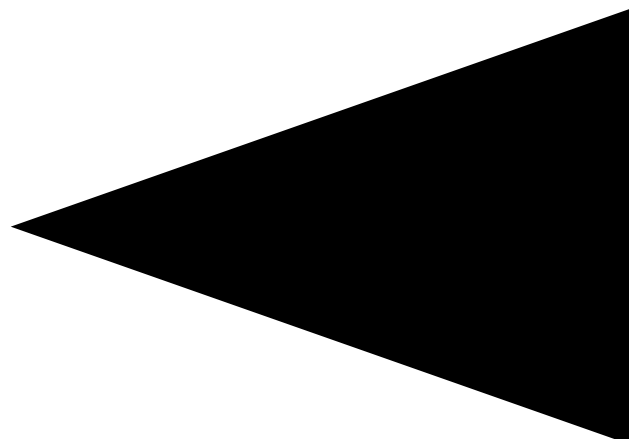




Our supporters.

Our impact.

**Thank you for changing the lives
of people living with low vision
or blindness.**



\$33m+

raised by more
than 34,000
supporters.



193

new Daisy Foundation members.

The Daisy Foundation was established to honour the generosity of our wonderful supporters who have included Guide Dogs NSW/ACT in their Will.

Pam and Junie.

Pam Behncke is an avid animal lover. In addition to caring for her own beloved dogs, she volunteers for the RSPCA, walking the dogs almost every morning! She also loves our pups and has been supporting Guide Dogs NSW/ACT for more than 21 years. Pam is a major donor, she attends the Canberra Giving Circle and has included a gift in her Will to Guide Dogs. Pam also shares a very special connection with one of our Guide Dog pups in training, Junie.

Pam previously had a mastiff Labrador named Junie, who sadly passed away. Pam named Guide Dog pup Junie in her honour and is currently following her journey to become a Guide Dog. In February this year, Pam and Junie finally met when Samantha and Claudia from the Philanthropy Team visited her in Canberra. They enjoyed morning tea in Pam's backyard while Junie befriended Pam's neighbour's dog, and tired herself out by running around and rolling in the grass. Pam has continued to meet up with Junie throughout the year and looks forward to supporting her as she continues her journey. Thank you Pam.



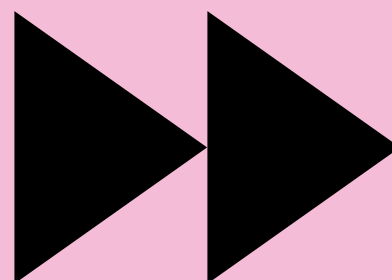
Gifts in Wills.

Thank you for your generosity.

In grateful memory of our very special supporters whom we cannot thank in person and whose life-changing gifts were received during the past year.

Nance Airey	Margorie Clark	Phillip Goldwyn
Keith Anderson	Alfred Cowen	Pamela Gooley
Christina Armour	Doreen Crawley	Cynthia Goundry
Shirley Arthur	Margaret Crawley	Norma Grant
Carol Ashford	Patricia Crowther	Ann Gray
The Bill and Joy Barrie Foundation	Jeanette Dean	Judith Green
Bonnie Bartle	Paul De Rome	William Greenaway
Susan Bateman	Fay Dickinson	Laura Greenwood
Jeanette Beresford	Pamela Dixsan	Stewart Guille
Guido Bertoldi	Susan Donegan	Valerie Hampson
Peter Birch	Suzanne Dryden	Shirley Healy
Barbara Bird	Alan Dunlop	Kathleen Heawood
Kerry Boardman	Ralph Dyer	Dianne Herbert
Margaret Bowers	Heather Emerton	Alwyne Hill
Denis Bradley	Patricia Evans	Jean Hill
Marlene Brash	Ingrid Farkas	Shirley Hill
Frances Brennan	Mary Fenton	Douglas Hillson
John Brodrick	Bruce Ferris	Christopher Hine
Dennis Brown	Ingeborg Fissler	Nance Holmes
Florence Brown	Ronald Flowers	Isobel Horsley
William Brown	Jean Foley	Henry Horvath
Ida Buckley	Lilianne Forbin	Clare Humphries
Ian Burrows	Susan Ford	Pamela Hunter
Barbara Bush	Jean Forster	Francis Jacobs
Florence Campbell	Alison Fox	Sally Jary
Anne Carolan	Donald Fraser	Steven Johnson
Beryl Caten	Janet Frommer	Alla Kamaralli
Elaine Cater	Joseph Galliani	Bruce Kelly
Geoffrey Chew	Micheil Gibb	Helen Kemp

The Kemvan Trust	Janice Neiley	Jennifer Tait
The John and Connie Kennedy Trust	Leslie Neilson	Margaret Taylor
Frank Keston	Denise Nellthorp	Wilma Thwaites
Elizabeth King	John Noble	Beryl Tidex
Lesley Kiss	Janet Noonan	Lynette Tobin
Denis Klein	Janice O'Reilly	Norma Todd
Abraham Kooy	Esme Parker	Reginald Traversi
Dianne Krummel	Maureen Parsons	Eric Turton
Angelo La Rocca	Robert Pauling	David Tweed
Shirley Latimer	Nancy Pegg	Thi Ly Van Hessen-Dao
Jeffrey Leach	Janie Penhall	Betty Wade
Phillipa Leask	Constance Plasto	Noeline Ward
Gail Leonard	The Prance Family Trust	Francine Waterman
Leone Liapis	Joan Preston	Margaret Watts
John Lockeridge	Michael Priceman	Helen Weatherford-Long
Noela Lunney	Ursula Pump	Gwendoline White
Jean MacGuinness	Hendrika Remy	Dorothea Whittome
Carmen-Diana Malins	Brian Reynolds	Rena Wickham
Mavis Mann	Alec Richardson	Nellie Wilding
Faye Mansfield	Olive Robinson	Faye Williams
Irene Martin	Robin Sampson	Olive Williamson
Ruby Mathews	Edith Sansom	William Wilson
Norma May	Richard Saunders	Lorraine Winks
Anita McKenzie	Synthia Sawatzky	Hilda Wright
Deci McNabb	Kurt Schremmer	Mary Wright
Eleanor McRobie	Raymond Sharpe	Yoshiko Wright
Jacqueline Merlino	Margaret Shaw	Johanna Wyld
Colin Messer	The Eleanor Smith Trust	Graham Zink
Helen Molesworth	Michael Stedman	
Josephine Moloney	Thomas Stee	
Beverley Monck	Garry Stephens	
Dawn Morgan	John Stewart	
Aileen Moss	Elizabeth Storrs	
Gweneth Mossman	June Strykowski	



Lynne and Robert Lillico.

Long-standing supporters, Lynne and Robert have been actively involved in the Central Coast Support Group for many years. Starting as an afternoon tea for interested local fundraisers in 1983, the group celebrated its 40-year anniversary earlier this year. Through raffles, fundraising stalls, fashion parades, charity walks, lawn bowls charity events and more, they have raised more than \$1 million dollars for Guide Dogs NSW/ACT. An incredible effort!

Robert is a Client of Guide Dogs, as are several other members of the Support Group. They take the opportunity to share their experiences of vision loss or blindness with the local community at the various events and activities organised throughout the year. They also provide information about Guide Dog access rights, etiquette and how best to assist a person with a Guide Dog or mobility cane. Lynne has also developed valuable connections with local media and newspapers and works closely with them to advocate and raise public awareness of Guide Dogs.

The couple plays another important role in managing and sourcing new sites for Guide Dogs' iconic Donation Dog program located in supermarkets, clubs and local stores throughout the Central Coast area.

And, if that isn't enough, Lynne and Robert have also decided to include a gift in their Will to Guide Dogs to acknowledge the services and assistance that Guide Dogs has provided to Robert over the years. This will ensure their legacy will go on to help people in the future like Robert, to live a full and inclusive life of their choosing.



Thank you.

We would like to thank the following trusts, foundations, groups and organisations for their generous support*:

Aged Persons Welfare Foundation

Albion Park Bowling and Recreation Club

Australian Philanthropic Services

Briars Sports Club

Bruce and Barbara Wright Bequest

The Bunderra Foundation

Burwood RSL Club

Chatswood RSL Club

The Duchen Family Foundation

Equity Trustees

G&P Nock Foundation

Georges River Council

The Graf Family Foundation

The Gregory Patrick & Marie Dolores Farrell Foundation

The Hargrove Foundation

The James N Kirby Foundation

Jemena

Lord Mayor's Charitable Fund - Eldon and Anne Foote

The Mundy Family Charitable Foundation

Newman's Own Foundation

Ngunnawal Aboriginal Corporation

Orange Ex-Services Club

The Perini Family Foundation

Perpetual Trustees

The Rali Foundation

The Ruth Marie Sampson Foundation

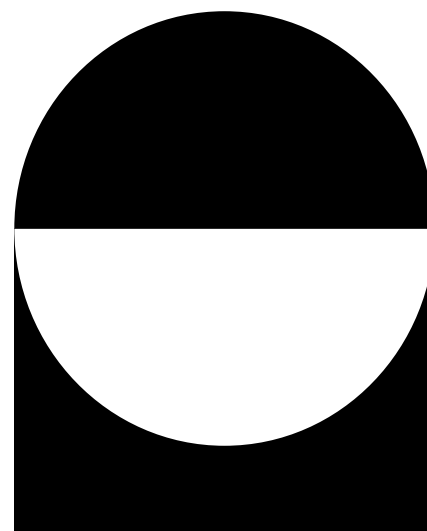
The S&J Cook Family Foundation

The Skipper-Jacobs Charitable Trust

Transurban

The William Rubensohn Foundation

*Donations \$5,000 and above in FY22-23.





Our gratitude.

Our National Corporate Partners.

We could not support Clients in the multitude of ways we do without our generous and passionate Corporate Partners, who assist us through donations, products and services in kind, volunteering, staff fundraising and workplace giving. We are proud to partner with all of them.

Guide Dogs NSW/ACT is a federated member of Guide Dogs Australia, which runs our National Corporate Partners program. The benefits of the program are shared across all participating states.

Some of the incredible contributions made by our National Corporate Partners throughout the last year include:



Expert Pet Nutrition™
ADVANCE™

As one of Guide Dogs longest-standing partners, **ADVANCE**™ supports the health of our growing Guide Dogs through the donation of super premium dog food for our colony of dogs. In the past year alone it has donated 94 tonnes of food.



Boehringer
Ingelheim
NexGard
HeartGard
ParaGard
NexGard
SPECTRA

Boehringer Ingelheim Animal Health Australia has provided complete preventative health support for our puppies and adult dogs, with over 2,500 vaccine doses and over 30,000 doses of parasite protection, including NexGard SPECTRA®, in the past year alone. This protection means our dogs are as healthy as they can possibly be.



coles

Thanks to the generous support of its customers and team members, **Coles Group** has raised over \$14 million since 1982 from initiatives such as our iconic Donation Dogs in Coles supermarkets and Coles Liquor stores and the sale of specially marked reusable shopping bags. In the past year alone, Coles has raised over \$865,000 to support Guide Dogs remove barriers so Clients can lead the lives of their choosing.



Expr3ss!
Predictive Hiring
Technology

Expr3ss! helps businesses save money by using its predictive hiring software to match the right person to the job. In the past year, Expr3ss! has supported Guide Dogs through puppy sponsorship and funding which has enabled Guide Dogs to continue to match Guide Dogs with Handlers, providing independence and freedom.



Since 2016, **Flybuys** has provided the opportunity for its members to redeem points earned from purchases at more than 20 retailers into much-needed donations which fund Guide Dogs' vital programs and services. As a result of this offering, Guide Dogs has received over \$80,000 in donations.



One of our valued National Partners since 2018, **Greenstone Financial Services** supports Guide Dogs through the provision of Guide Dogs Pet Insurance which, through various levels of cover, helps cover unexpected vet bills and protects dogs, cats and registered Guide Dogs.



As a valued supporter of Guide Dogs for more than 10 years, **IDEXX** provides complimentary pathology tests to support the health of our Guide Dogs puppies and adult dogs, performing 3,108 test profiles in the past year. These tests help predict and prevent health issues and enable us to create an incredibly well-bred, healthy colony of dogs.



KONG Company has partnered with Guide Dogs since 2018 to make sure our dogs' development is supported through its iconic, high-quality enrichment toys and expert enrichment advice.



Providing support to Guide Dogs since 2014, **Petstock Foundation** has organised in-store activities, Guide Dogs' Month and support for our Puppy Raising program. Petstock also champions the work we do through campaigns and staff education.



Guide Dogs and **Ritchies IGA** have been proud partners for 30 years. Through the Ritchies Community Benefit Card Program, Guide Dogs has received more than \$400,000 in donations to help support the essential work we do, ensuring Australians living with low vision or blindness can live independently.



The **TPG Telecom Foundation's** purpose is to create opportunities to improve the health, wellbeing and education of Australian communities in need. The Foundation supports Guide Dogs' CatchUp, a free, interactive and accessible online platform which connects Australians with low vision or blindness, providing opportunities to socialise, learn and gain support through a personalised, accessible online experience.



SUNNIES. SPECS. SAFETY.

Ugly Fish Eyewear is a leading Australian eyewear brand that has supported PAWGUST, and additionally provides ongoing support to Guide Dogs with \$1 donated for every online transaction that includes a pair of glasses.



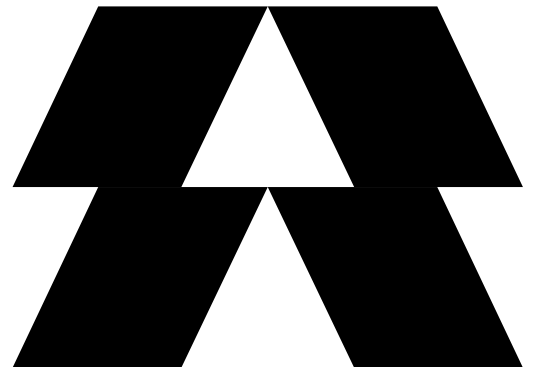
Since 1978 when our dogs were first placed in what was then known as Safeway Supermarkets in Victoria, **Woolworths** stores nationally have hosted our iconic Donation Dogs. Over the years, customer and staff donations through these dogs have raised millions of dollars and played a vital role in supporting our charity, with more than \$360,000 raised in the past financial year alone.



XL Events creates and facilitates Team Building Events. It has been working with Guide Dogs to develop the Unleashed Race to support Guide Dogs. This exciting event will give participants a glimpse into the lives of those living with low vision or blindness and provide vital funding to help Guide Dogs continue its important work.

Thank you.

We thank all of our partners for their ongoing commitment to our important work and their passion for supporting Australians living with low vision or blindness to reach their full potential.



A partnership close to our heart.

While our Clients are at the heart of everything we do, our Corporate partnerships help us keep that heart beating.

Every year for more than 10 years, IDEXX, a global leader in diagnostic solutions, has provided thousands of preventive health tests, at no cost, to help diagnose and prevent illness and keep our colony of dogs healthy.

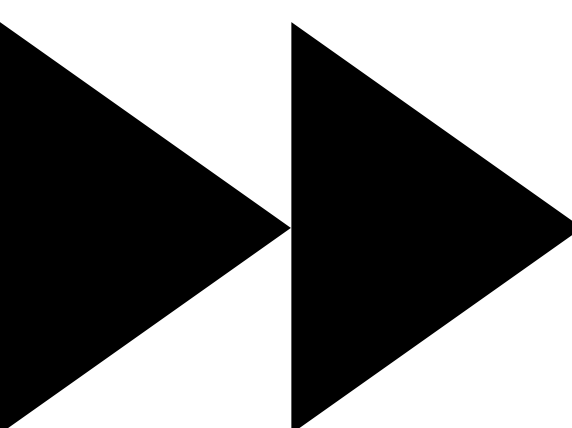
Like all good partners, the people at IDEXX go above and beyond – providing support and creating impact in rich and varied ways. In the past year, it has not just followed the journey of Elvis, a Guide Dog Puppy, but ‘IDEXXer’ Zoe took on the valuable volunteer role of Puppy Raising Elvis, in the process making him an integral part of the IDEXX family. Zoe’s efforts with Elvis will have a positive impact on the life of his future family or Handler in immeasurable ways.

IDEXX’s mission is to enhance the health and wellbeing of animals and people and it certainly does that for the dogs at Guide Dogs, our people and our Clients. We feel the love and commitment from this partnership, which grows the values both organisations hold as sacred into a collaborative, living, breathing reality.



“We’re thrilled to be a long-standing partner for Guide Dogs, and while this is one aspect of our ongoing commitment to our communities, it’s a significant one that all IDEXXers can support and contribute to.”

Brooke Troth, Regional Marketing Leader IDEXX.



Pro bono support.

Thank you for your support.



**Baker
McKenzie.**

Baker McKenzie

Sydney



Colin Biggers & Paisley Foundation

Sydney



Hall & Wilcox

Sydney



Hicksons Lawyers

Newcastle

BoardOutlook

Guide Dogs NSW/ACT uses BoardOutlook to conduct an annual Board evaluation on the performance of the Board. In 2022/23, Guide Dogs NSW/ACT benefited from a \$50,000 grant under the BoardOutlook not-for-profit program.



Our governance.

Guide Dogs NSW/ACT Board of Directors.

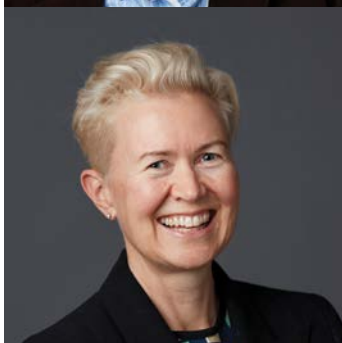
as at 30 June 2023.



Kieran Lane

Chair

“Being a Director and Chair of Guide Dogs enables me to focus on providing real assistance to people with a disability to live a complete life.”



Jacqui Jones

Deputy Chair

“I love that we are focused on ensuring that people with blindness or low vision have independence so they can get on with achieving their life goals!”



Breanna Davies

“I am passionate about ensuring an inclusive world where everyone can thrive.”



Cameron Evans

“I am passionate about building a more inclusive society that enables everyone to reach their life goals.”



Ian Jamieson

“I am proud to be a part of bringing confidence and independence to people with low vision.”



Karen Knight

“Being a Director enables me to bring my lived experience and extensive knowledge of the blindness sector to assist people who are blind or have low vision to have access to the supports and services to live the life they choose.”



Robin Low

“I have loved Guide Dogs all my life. My role is made most rewarding because of the way Guide Dogs brings together our Clients, our people, our dogs and technology to enable better lives.”



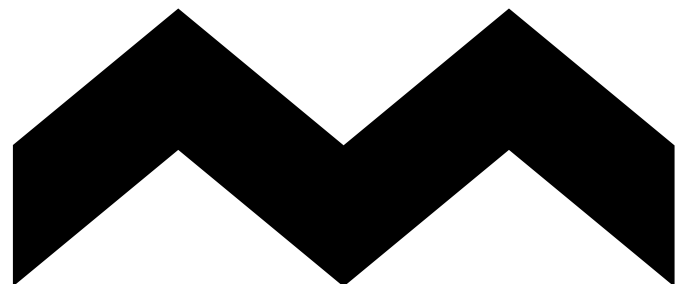
Darryl Newton

“I love being part of a group of people that make a profound difference in people’s lives.”



Liz Ward

“I am passionate about being able to contribute to an organisation that is committed to changing people’s lives and being part of the Guide Dogs family that shares that passion.” - Resigned 11 October 2023.



Thank you from Ian Jamieson.

With my journey as a Guide Dogs NSW/ACT Director drawing to a close, I would like to thank all of the Guide Dogs team, my fellow Directors and, of course, our valued Clients and supporters, all of whom have made my experience in the past 14 years so rewarding. I am immensely proud of our achievements and consider it a great honour to have served the blind and low vision community in Australia.

Highlights include the successful establishment of the Centre for Eye Health, providing early diagnostic services to thousands of people with severe vision loss/conditions, supporting and growing our brand, earning its place as one of Australia's most trusted brands,



designing and developing our award-winning new accessible offices at St Leonards in Sydney, expanding our services to more and more people who are blind or have low vision and, of course, cementing our position as Australia's leading supplier of Guide Dogs.

I am excited about the future for Guide Dogs and I look forward to seeing its continuing success.

Corporate Governance Statement.

Guide Dogs NSW/ACT has developed a Corporate Governance Statement to promote fairness, transparency and accountability. The statement describes our key governance practices and articulates how decision-making is guided to meet stakeholder expectations of sound corporate governance, meeting Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) Governance Standards and acknowledging our responsibilities to members, donors, Clients, staff, volunteers and the communities in which we operate.

Read more about **Governance** on our website.





Our financials.

Revenue.

Income	Amount	Percent of income
Gifts in Wills	21,885,551	52
Donations and other fundraising activities	11,129,357	26
NDIS, Medicare and other government revenue	5,024,201	12
Income from investments	3,159,627	8
Contract Services income	236,388	1
Other income	553,305	1
Total revenue	41,988,429	100

Expenses.

Expenditure	Amount	Percent of expenditure
Client and community services	26,963,515	61
Costs of fundraising and gifts in wills	7,762,210	18
Marketing	1,868,862	4
Governance, finance and administration	7,679,024	17
Total expenses	44,273,611	100

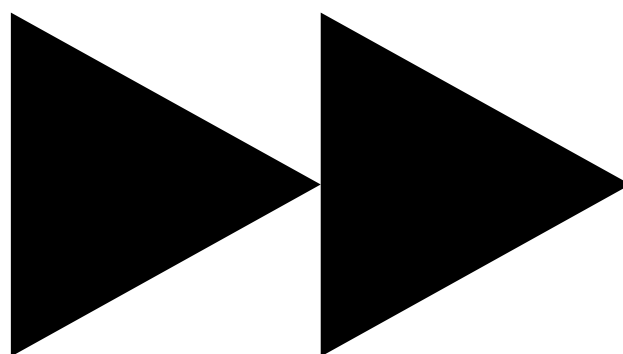
Staff costs are included in each category.

Statement of Comprehensive Income.

Income	2023 \$'000	2022 \$'000
Bequests	21,886	24,046
Donations	11,033	11,221
Sale of fundraising merchandise	96	96
Investment income	3,160	2,277
NDIS, Medicare and other government revenue	5,024	4,624
Contract Services income	236	313
Other income	553	754
Revenue	41,988	43,331
Other gains/(losses)		
Net gain/(loss) on financial assets including the fair value movement through profit and loss	1,229	(6,837)
Net gain on disposal of non-current assets	266	92
Total income	43,483	36,586
Client Services costs	(26,960)	(25,267)
Community education and advocacy	(4)	(97)
Fundraising overheads including:		
– Fundraising donor management	(3,602)	(3,015)
– Planned giving expenditure	(1,114)	(1,200)
– Appeal costs	(3,046)	(2,542)
Marketing	(1,869)	(1,776)
Governance and administrative services	(7,679)	(6,777)
Total expenses	(44,274)	(40,674)
Net surplus from ordinary activities	(791)	(4,088)
Other comprehensive income	–	–
Total comprehensive income	(791)	(4,088)

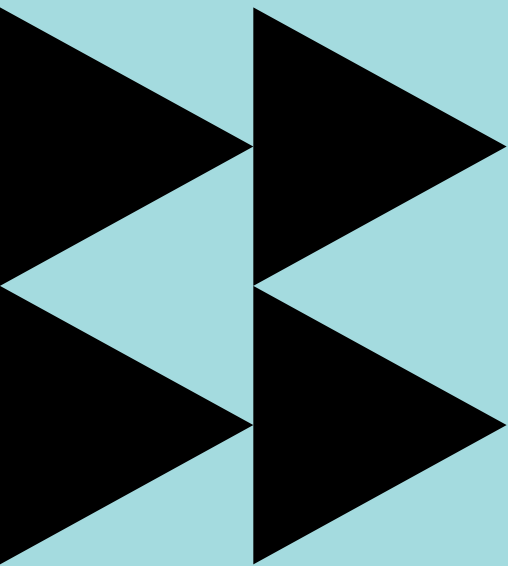
Statement of Financial Position.

Financial position	2023 \$'000	2022 \$'000
Current assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	4,845	7,297
Trade and other receivables	1,133	5,284
Inventories	134	125
Other financial assets	6,667	267
Other current assets	337	411
Total current assets	13,116	13,384
Non-current assets		
Other financial assets	-	400
Financial assets at fair value through profit or loss	69,522	66,429
Property, plant and equipment	16,340	18,569
Right of Use assets	2,484	1,229
Intangibles	12	20
Total non-current assets	88,358	86,647
Total assets	101,474	100,030



Statement of Financial Position continued.

Current liabilities		
Trade and other payables	3,120	2,841
Leasehold liabilities	1,222	656
Employee leave provisions	2,076	1,935
Contract liabilities	418	13
Leasehold make good liability	276	0
Total current liabilities	7,112	5,445
Non-current liabilities		
Employee leave provisions	498	301
Leasehold make good liability	-	115
Leasehold liabilities	1,183	697
Total non-current liabilities	1,681	1,113
Total liabilities	8,793	6,558
Net assets	92,681	93,473
Accumulated funds		
Accumulated surplus	91,325	92,116
Reserves	1,356	1,356
Total accumulated funds	92,681	93,472



We're here whenever you need us.

📍 7-9 Albany Street, St Leonards NSW 2065

☎ 1800 436 364

🌐 www.nsw.guidedogs.com.au

**Guide
Dogs.**

ABN 52 000 399 744